

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, WB, GW, US, UK, FR, GW

SUBJECT: SENAT VERMERK ON AIR TRANSPORT OF PRISONERS

REF: A) USBER 2264; B) USBER 2230; C) BONN 18556

1. AT DEC 12 TRIPARTITE MEETING, UK REP (CULLIMORE) RAISED SENAT REQUEST FOR ALLIED ASSURANCES REGARDING TRANSPORT TO THE FRG OF PRISONERS. HE SAID THAT UK EMBASSY WAS OF VERY FIRM VIEW THAT ALLIES MUST AVOID ANY KIND OF COMMITMENT IN WRITING. SITUATIONS IN WHICH ALLIES WOULD HAVE TO ACT COULD BE ENVISAGED, BUT "LAST RESORT" COMMITMENT WOULD HAVE EFFECT OF BECOMING THE EASY OPTION FOR SENAT. FRENCH REP (BOISSIEU) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES AGREED; WHAT WAS REQUESTED WAS NOT REALLY SOMETHING "FOR BERLIN" AND WAS A GERMAN PROBLEM. ALL REPS SUBSEQUENTLY AGREED ON FOLLOWING POINTS: A) NO GOOD CASE HAS YET BEEN MADE THAT MOVEMENT OF MEINHOF OR ANY OTHER PRISONER WAS REQUIRED FOR PUBLIC SAFETY IN BERLIN AND WAS THUS AN ULTIMATE ALLIED RESPONSIBILITY; B) NO GOOD CASE HAS YET BEEN MADE THAT LAND TRANSIT ROUTES SHOULD NOT BE USED; C) NO GOOD CASE HAS YET BEEN MADE THAT SENAT AND FRG ARE UNABLE TO MAKE OWN ARRANGEMENT

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WITH AN ALLIED FLAG CHARTER FIRM AND ALLIES MUST THERE-

FORE INTERPOSE SELVES; AND D) NO GOOD CASE HAS YET BEEN MADE THAT NATURE OF AIR REGIME MEANS ALLIES HAVE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE CHARTER ARRANGEMENTS FOR SENAT IN CASES OF THIS KIND.

2. FRENCH REP SAID THAT PARIS HAS ALREADY ISSUED VERY TOUGH INSTRUCTIONS WITH LINE BEING THAT TRANSPORT OF PRISONERS IS A GERMAN PROBLEM. BOISSIEU AGREED WITH BRITISH POSITION THAT ANY KIND OF WRITTEN ALLIED COMMITMENT TO SENAT TO PROVIDE EVEN LAST RESORT TRANSPORTATION WOULD QUICKLY BE INVOKED BY GERMANS AS EASIEST WAY OUT, AND HE PROPOSED POSSIBLE ORAL RESPONSE ON LINES PROBLEM IS FUNDAMENTALLY A GERMAN ONE AND SENAT SHOULD DO SOME CAREFUL PLANNING AND ARRANGING OF CONTINGENCY AIR CHARTER AND/OR OTHER TRANSPORTATION. OTHER REPS AGREED AND BOISSIEU SAID HE WOULD PRESENT POSSIBLE TEXT IN UPCOMING MEETING.

3. COMMENT: FACT THAT UKBER WAS ABLE TO FIND WILLING CHARTER FIRM WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD IN MEINHOF INSTANCE SEEMS TO BE GROUNDS TO BELIEVE THAT SENAT/FRG, IF PROPERLY MOTIVATED (I.E. NO REASON TO EXPECT THAT ALLIES WOULD BAIL THEM OUT) WILL BE ABLE TO DO THE SAME OVER MUCH LONGER PERIOD, WHICH THEY NOW HAVE IN WHICH TO DO SOME CAREFUL CONTINGENCY PLANNING. OUR RECOGNITION THAT ALLIES MAY UNDER SOME CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE TO PROVIDE AIR TRANSPORT SHOULD NOT, IT SEEMS TO US, LEAD US TO TAKE POSITION VIS A VIS SENAT WHICH WOULD UNDERMINE BERLIN/FRG MOTIVATION TO PROCEED WITH OWN CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS.
HILLENBRAND

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